

NSDAP Germany Did Not Start WW2

Introduction

With the recent conflict in the Ukraine, people, in part due to the irresponsible Western media, tend to look at authoritarian rulers like Putin as essentially irrational beings hell-bent on world domination, usually referring to Hitler and the NSDAP. Yet, this is nothing but a deliberate distortion of history, done to portray the liberal democracies as the “good guys”.

Thus, the purpose of this essay is right a historical error and to make the case that NSDAP Germany was, to a large extent, not responsible for the outbreak of WW2, contrary to popular belief. This essay will first address rearmament, for it is the most pernicious of myths, followed by a more detailed discussion on the events before the British guarantee to Poland as well as after it, up to 1 September 1939.

German Rearmament

Extensive rearmament of the German armed forces under the NSDAP has frequently been claimed as proof that NSDAP Germany was an aggressive military power. It has also frequently been charged that it was due to rearmament that Germany was able to recover from the Great Depression and become a major economic power.

However, such an explanation falls apart upon examination. Contrary to popular belief, rearmament was not prioritised by the NSDAP administration during the prewar period.

German military historian Hartmut Schustereit, as cited by Richard Tedor (2021), writes:

“Hitler assigned no armaments objectives for the three service branches... He had no plan for realizable goals for the arms industry to pursue... The vague instructions as to how these as-yet-unspecified armaments objectives were to be attained over the next several years, do not suggest that Hitler at this time expected to be at war just three-quarters of a year later.” (p. 73)

Since Hitler had no clear armaments objectives, therefore there was really no incentive to produce armaments in any large scale. Therefore, the German army could not have been properly equipped for war and thus was not prepared for any kind of long-term war. Therefore, the claim then that Germany's economy recovered through rearmament is very weak because a program of extensive rearmament simply did not exist. The British historian A.J.P. Taylor (1961), who can hardly be described as pro-NSDAP, summed it up rather nicely when he said that "the state of German armament in 1939 gives the decisive proof that Hitler was not contemplating general war, and probably not intending war at all" (p.218).

Now, the reader may rush to point out how Germany undertook several secret projects to develop its own tanks and aircraft. Yet, the first question that must be asked is why is there a presupposition that if a country is rearming, it must be rearming for aggressive intent? The reader here will thus be reminded that these secret projects are occurring in the context of a particular historical event, namely the Treaty of Versailles, which was generally regarded as unjust by even many British civilians, let alone Germans.

There are also other very real and perfectly legitimate reasons that the reader should account for. For example, a strong military is a source of national strength and pride. A strong military is also a useful tool for diplomacy and defence for it provides leverage in negotiations.

In summary, given that a program of extensive rearmament did not exist, and rearmament itself is not necessarily a sign of aggressive intent considering the historical background and circumstances of NSDAP Germany, it can be concluded that rearmament of Germany is not proof of intentional German military aggression. If anything, the state of rearmament suggests lack of aggressive intent. I wonder how the Germans will wage war without extensive ammunition or weapons?

Poland: What happened?

The reader may be thinking that the invasion of Poland happened because Hitler wanted war with the world and wanted to satisfy his project of *lebensraum* and attacked Poland while unprovoked.

Yet, examination of the events in the time building up to September 1939 paints a completely different picture. In the following sections, it will be decisively proven that Germany was not primarily responsible for the outbreak of WW2, and the fault lies mostly with Polish and British intransigence. The method of the following sections will be to cover crucial background on Poland for context, discussion on events leading up to the British guarantee of Poland, the British guarantee itself, and finally events after the guarantee leading up to 1 September 1939.

Crucial Background on Poland

To understand the outbreak of this conflict, some background information on Poland will be recalled here.

After WW1, due to the break-up of old empires like Russia and Austria-Hungary, many smaller nation-states were formed. One of these nation-states would be Poland, and since this was the age of nationalism, there was, needless to say, a strong sense of Polish nationalism. There are several schools of Polish nationalist thought, but the most relevant will be Marshal Pilsudski's (of Miracle of the Vistula fame) brand of Polish nationalism because Jozef Beck, Polish foreign minister before and during the outbreak of WW2, was a loyal disciple of Pilsudski who inherited his philosophy and attitude on foreign policy.

Pilsudski's form of Polish nationalism, in short, tries to recreate the glory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and thus Pilsudski's Polish nationalism saw Poland as a Great Power. Consequently, the attitude regarding foreign affairs would be that of a Great Power, where Poland would act as though it was independent of other states in international politics (Hoggan, 2020, p.5-6). Therefore, with such an attitude, Poland would categorically reject cooperation with her neighbours, both Germany and the Soviet Union.

Events Leading up to the British Guarantee

The event that led up to the British guarantee to Poland was the annexation of Czecho-Slovakia, which was in turn actually created by the Munich Agreement (which, it must be reminded, was initiated by Britain and France), and not the work of German aggression, contrary to popular belief as well as propaganda from the media establishment in the liberal democracies. Let me explain.

To understand why the Munich Agreement is what caused the collapse of Czecho-Slovakia, again more background information is needed, this time on CzechoSlovakia. Here, it must be understood that Czecho-Slovakia was not born from the principle of self-determination but based on the terms of the Versailles Treaty;

Czecho-Slovakia is a truly multi-national state, which Mussolini called “CzechoGermano-Polono-Magyar-Rutheno-Rumano-Slovakia” (Hoggan, 2020, p.58).

This, combined with how the Czecho-Slovakian minorities together outnumber the Czechs as well as hostile government policy towards its own minorities (Hoggan, 2020, p.58) meant that Czecho-Slovakia was at great risk of destabilising after Anschluss, where the Germans there obtained their right to self-determination after being denied it at Versailles.

There is also ample evidence of Czech mistreatment of the German minority, which includes firing upon peaceful Sudeten German protestors as well as statistical manipulation to deny representation to the German minority (Tedor, 2021, p.108109). Based on this, no one should be surprised that Konrad Heinlein, head of the Sudeten German Party who, should be noted, has 90 percent of Sudeten voters behind him, demanded autonomy for the Sudetenland (Tedor, 2021, p.112).

The response of the Czechs, instead of granting autonomy and addressing the legitimate grievances of the German minority in Czecho-Slovakia, is to order partial mobilisation on May 20, 1938, while, without any evidence whatsoever, claiming that this partial mobilisation was in response to German troop concentrations on the Czech border; this complete lack of evidence was also verified by British military

experts (Hoggan, 2020, p.88). Through this provocative act, the Czechs hoped to be able to draw in the British and the French; the French already had an alliance with Czecho-Slovakia and Britain was at least nominally allied with France, and if Britain and France were to properly commit to Czecho-Slovakia, that would provide CzechoSlovakia with a much stronger hand in any negotiations with Germany. It would also hold Britain and France to provide support to Czecho-Slovakia should it attempt to start a conflict with Germany, lest Britain and France suffer serious blows to their prestige and their international reputation. However, the British and French refused to commit, thus Hitler saw his chance and decided it was appropriate to press the issue of the liberation of the Sudeten Germans. All of this would eventually result in the Munich Agreement, where Czecho-Slovakia would cede the Sudetenland to the Germans to avoid an outbreak of war over Europe.

Based on the given facts, it should therefore come as no surprise that after Munich, the Czech state was in even greater danger of destabilisation; certainly, no specious claims about agitation from Germany are required to explain it, as some might do.

The other minorities, upon seeing the minority Germans obtain their right to selfdetermination and have also suffered oppression at the hands of the Czech state as previously mentioned, coupled with the realisation that Britain and France will not come to the aid of Czecho-Slovakia, would have emboldened the other minorities to push for self-determination. This would be amply proven when in October 1938, “the Slovaks and Ruthenians established regional parliaments” (Tedor, 2021, p.120).

Further emboldened by how the Czechs gave ground, the minorities would press further beyond autonomy for independence, with Emil Hacha, the Czech president, employing military force, martial law, and dissolution of the regional parliament in Slovakia to restore order and combat separatism in early March 1939 (Tedor, 2021, p.120). Hacha, with a complete lack of self-awareness (albeit most likely out of desperation due to the grave threat of fragmentation of the state), appealed to Dr Tiso, leader of the Slovaks, to help restore order. No one should then be surprised that Tiso opted instead to visit Hitler on March 13, 1939, to request for German protection of Slovakian independence, which Hitler agreed to. From here on the rest is history: Emil Hacha goes over to Berlin on his own initiative upon seeing the

writing on the wall and essentially hands full sovereignty of Czecho-Slovakia over to Hitler.

Contrary to what some hysterical minds might think, Hitler had exactly zero need to force Hacha into such a drastic move, which has been amply shown when it was Hacha who requested an audience with Hitler first, not the other way around. It should also be quite clear by now that Munich dealt a great blow to Czech prestige, for it was then clear to everyone, including Czecho-Slovakia's hostile neighbours like Poland and Hungary (Poland due to Teschen, Hungary due to the Versailles Treaty), that Czecho-Slovakia stands alone, and they "smelled blood in the water", so to speak. With both external and internal threats against the existence of CzechoSlovakia mounting to the point where Hacha had to resort to force in an attempt to put down separatist tendencies, Hacha had little choice but to go over to Germany; Poland and Hungary are not serious options for Hacha because those two states are hostile to Czecho-Slovakia. This would pay off when the Czechs in what is now called the Bohemia-Moravia Protectorate as part of the Reich were granted a great deal of autonomy, where "Czech remained the official language" (Tedor, 2021, p.122) and Hacha and his government, from April 27 1939 onwards, was allowed to manage basically nearly every aspect of governance except foreign policy and finance (Tedor, 2021, p.122).

The British Guarantee to Poland and What Happened After

By now, the picture should be exceedingly clear. There is nothing here that is a sure sign of German aggression, and everything that transpired can be logically explained with something that does not require any presupposition of irrational behaviour, as all too many so-called academics are quick to do regarding this period in history.

Therefore, it is rather strange when the British started telling the world how Germany was violating the spirit of Munich and how appeasement is a failing strategy, for German aggression is now supposedly proven beyond all doubt. It is also during this time that Britain provided that infamous guarantee to Poland; I will let the reader be the judge as to what the true purpose of calling out supposed German aggression is.

The British guarantee to Poland would have drastic consequences. Before the guarantee, Poland was on friendly enough terms with Germany. However, the British guarantee changed everything. With this guarantee, Poland now has the impression that the British would back it in everything it does, therefore emboldening Poland. Given the fact that the Poles, through the appointment of Jozef Beck as Polish foreign minister after the death of Pilsudski in 1935, had an anti-German attitude regarding foreign policy, what happened was practically inevitable; the Poles now started a policy of not negotiating with the Germans because the Poles now feel they have the stronger hand, with the might of the British Empire at their beck and call. The question of how the British were actually going to provide the pledged military support to Poland apparently did not occur to the Poles when they were pursuing this particularly intransigent change to their foreign policy.

Before this, the Germans were attempting to work a deal with the Poles because of that accursed Versailles Treaty, yet again; in that treaty, Danzig was taken from Germany along with the Polish corridor, the former going to the League of Nations and the latter to Poland. Given that Poland gained greatly at Germany's expense, it should surprise the reader that Hitler actually dared to renounce the Polish Corridor and other formerly German territories in exchange for Danzig and a right to build an *autobahn* across the Polish Corridor to link East Prussia with the main Reich (Tedor, 2021, p.131). This would not have sat well with a nationalist German public who had to suffer the humiliation of Versailles and was thus not a popular policy amongst the German public.

After the British guarantee to Poland, tensions between Germany and Poland escalated, with Poland acting in an increasingly belligerent manner. Some examples will be illustrated here to demonstrate the point.

After the British guarantee, Poland kept increasing the number of customs inspectors in Danzig. These inspectors also kept going to areas beyond their jurisdiction with an apparent interest in Danzig's military capabilities. Because of this, Greiser, Danzig's senate president, protested about the Polish inspectors on June 3, 1939, to Danzig's Polish commissioner, Marian Chodacki. Chodacki's response was to threaten economic sanctions against Danzig, to arm said inspectors and threat of reprisal should their activities be interfered with (Tedor, 2021, p.133). The Poles also "fired

on Lufthansa passenger planes flying over the Baltic Sea to East Prussia (Tedor, 2021, p.134) and shot at fleeing German refugees (Tedor, 2021, p.136).

Because of Polish intransigence and the inherent intolerance of the Danzig question, Germany would therefore be pushed to sign a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union, famously known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. If the reader would pull up a map of Central Europe while bearing in mind what has happened so far, the motive for this is quite clear. Germany, now boxed in between Poland and France, would be under that same threat of encirclement like Imperial Germany. Therefore, Soviet cooperation was crucial to help defang the threat of encirclement; at least now the Germans are sure the Russians will not march against them should the Germans attack Poland. This is not to say that Germany actually intended to attack Poland even during this late stage right before the war but was a way of giving Germany an option when needed. This is again proven when Hitler postponed a planned attack on 26th August 1939 to “gain time for further negotiations” (Tedor, 2021, p.135) and how Hitler even on 30th August bothered to draw up the Marienwerder proposals, which would contain the same conditions as before regarding Danzig and the Polish Corridor. It is significant that the British did not bother pressing the Poles to negotiate with the Germans and speaks of true British opinion about Germany.

When even this non-aggression pact failed to quell the Poles, Germany would make the fateful decision to go to war on September 1939.

The reader might think that Germany should simply have given up Danzig to avoid war with Poland. My response would then be that this is simply impossible due to political realities in Germany; the German public would never accept giving up Danzig and cooperation with Poland the way Hitler did was already unpopular, so Hitler had to at least look like he got something out of it. It should also be noted that Poland could very well take this as a sign of weakness to press Germany further for more territorial demands, which is completely possible given the Polish mentality I've outlined in the context section. Finally, note the suffering the Danziger Germans had to go through, and bear in mind that Hitler came to power because of German nationalism.

Conclusions

There is little evidence to suggest that Hitler actually wanted to start a war or started one. German rearmament is not evidence of aggression; if anything, the state of rearmament proves that Germany was not aggressive. In addition, the events leading up to WW2 was not primarily the fault of Germany but rather its neighbours; the Czech crisis was ultimately started by the Czechs themselves and Poland was the provocateur after the British blank check, with the British doing nothing to moderate the Poles and open them up to negotiations. Assumptions regarding the supposed irrationality of fascist leaders are therefore unnecessary.

References

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